GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ATOMIC ENERGY
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1574
ANSWERED ON:29.07.2015
Tapping Uranium Reserves
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Will the Minister of ATOMIC ENERGY be pleased to state:

(a)whether Nuclear Power Plants are presently starved because of non- availability of uranium and if so, the details thereof;

(b)whether there are large quantities of untapped reserves of uranium, estimated over one lakh tonnes in the States of Jharkhand, Meghalaya, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu and Bihar;

(c)if so, the reasons for these reserves remained untapped and instead theGovernment is pursuing foreign sources;

(d)whether the Government has taken any steps to tap/extract the uranium deposits of the above States; and

(e)if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES & PENSIONS AND PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (Dr. JITENDRA SINGH) :

(a)No, Sir.

(b)Atomic Minerals Directorate for Exploration and Research (AMD) a constituent unit of Department of Atomic Energy(DAE), has established uranium resources, majority of which are located in the states of Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Jharkhand, Meghalaya and Rajasthan. As of now, AMD has not established any substantial reserves in the States of Tamil Nadu and Bihar.

(c) Mining technology and economics are the important criteria which decide the exploitation status of a deposit. Based on these criteria, many of the small deposits are not amenable to mining at present. In addition, constraints due to logistics, present status of technology, socio-economic considerations, environmental aspects, scarcity of water-resources etc., hinder the process of initiation of mining of some of the deposits at Meghalaya, Rajasthan, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Telengana.

There is no slackening of efforts to fully tap all potentially viable uranium resources, Indian uranium resources alone, however, are not sufficient to meet the requirements of all the current reactors and those planned in future.The Indian reactors under International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards are, therefore, been fuelled with imported uranium.

(d)Yes, Sir.

(e)Uranium Corporation of India Ltd. (UCIL) a Public Sector Enterprise under Department of Atomic Energy is engaged in mining and processing of uranium ore in the country.
The Company is operating seven uranium mines and two process plants in Jharkhand. Some of these units are under capacity augmentation. A large underground mine and process plant at Tummalapalle in Andhra Pradesh has been constructed and expected to start production soon. In addition, a new underground mine and plant at Gogi in Karnataka, open pit mine at Kylleng Pymdengsohiong Mawathabah (KPM) in Meghalaya, one open pit and three underground mines at Lambapur in Telangana, and one uranium mining project in Sikar district of Rajasthan are in different stages of implementation.

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